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BACKO REVEALS FRENCH COMPLICITY IN CAR COUP

LD221224 PARIS DOMESTIC SERVICE IN FRENCH 1200 GMT 22 SEP 79 LD

(EXCERPT) IT WAS SUSPECTED BEFORE BUT NOW IT IS OFFICIAL: THE COUP D'ETAT WHICH OVERTHREW EMPEROR BOKASSA WAS INDEED PLANNED BY THE NEW LEADER IN BANGUI, PRESIDENT DACKO, WITH THE AID OF FRANCE AND OF FRIENDLY AFRICAN COUNTRIES. IT IS DAVID DACKO HIMSELF WHO HAS JUST REVEALED THIS FACT.

IT WAS A VERY WELL-GUARDED SECRET, HE EXPLAINED. NONE OF THE AFRICAN LEADERS WHO KNEW WHAT HE WAS PREPARING LET ANYTHING LEAK OUT. THE NEW CENTRAL AFRICAN HEAD OF STATE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT, ABOVE ALL, HE WAS RELYING ON HIS GOOD FRENCH FRIENDS.

THIS ROLE PLAYED BY FRANCE IN THE COUP D'ETAT EXPLAINS, PERHAPS, THE WELCOME GIVEN BY THE POPULATION OF BANGUI TO THE FRENCH CONTINGENT WHICH ARRIVED THERE A FEW HOURS AFTER THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC. THE 800 SOLDIERS WERE WELCOMED AS LIBERATORS WITH CRIES OF: LONG LIVE THE FRENCH ARMY! THE ROLE OF THESE TROOPS AT THE MOMENT IS, ABOVE ALL, TO PREVENT LOOTING.

MEANWHILE, ONE OF THE OPPOSITION LEADERS IN EXILE, SYLVESTRE BANGUI, BOKASSA'S FORMER AMBASSADOR IN PARIS, HAS LEFT BY PLANE FOR THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC. HE WANTS TO HAVE TALKS WITH PRESIDENT DACKO. HE SAYS HE IS READY TO SIDE WITH HIM BUT ONLY UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

AS FOR JEAN-BEDEL BOKASSA, HE IS STILL IN HIS CARAVELLE, AT THE END OF THE RUNWAY AT EVREUX MILITARY BASE. HE IS STILL HOPING TO OBTAIN ASYLUM IN FRANCE BUT, APPARENTLY, THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES WILL NOT PERMIT IT.

22 SEP 1336Z GJS/CAJ

(Ivory)